

The CADET

U.S. Army Cadet Command's quarterly magazine

May 2010 Vol. I Issue II

Voices of Experience

Top Cadets hear from Army leadership
at the 2010 George C. Marshall ROTC
Awards Seminar

Top trainer

University of California-Berkley
staff sergeant named Cadet
Command's NCO of the Year

Sandhurst 2010

University of Louisville tops ROTC
teams at international military
skills competition

Cadet Command news online at <http://cadetcommand.armylive.dodlive.mil>

On the cover:
Gen. Martin Dempsey, commanding general of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, speaks to George C. Marshall Award winners in Jackson Memorial Hall on the campus of the Virginia Military Institute. *Photo by Forrest Berkshire*



A University of North Dakota Cadet crosses a one-rope bridge during the Sandhurst 2010 competition. Additional coverage on page 14. *Photo by Forrest Berkshire*

Inside

- 4 **Top programs recognized with MacArthur Awards**
Eight Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs were honored in February as the top units in the nation
- 4 **JROTC drill season sees repeat, new champs**
Familiar champions took titles in the Western and Eastern drill championships, but new winners emerged as well in the competitions
- 5 **Cadet Command NCOs compete for top spot**
Staff Sgt. Russell Kojo, of the University of California-Berkley, wins NCO of the Year title for U.S. Army Cadet Command
- 6 **An example to the community**
Lakes High School JROTC in Lakewood, Wash., has earned the respect of its community through hard work
- 8 **Best and brightest**
The top Cadet from each battalion in the country spent three days hearing from top Army leaders at the George C. Marshall Awards
- 12 **Memorializing World War II prisoners of war**
Cadets from more than 30 campuses took part in the Bataan Memorial Death March through the desert of White Sands, N.M.
- 14 **Competing against the best**
Eight ROTC teams showed their competitive spirits and determination in the Sandhurst Military Skills Competition at West Point, N.Y.
- 17 **Broadening horizons**
Learning opportunities for Cadets extend off campus into the summer through study abroad programs and Army schools
- 18 **A labor of love**
Family-owned business works hard to put Junior ROTC Cadets in the spotlight through drill competitions

The Cadet

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An uncertain world needs leaders

Future leaders of America's Army charge onward



With summer already upon us, the year 2010 proves to be one of Cadet Command's best years yet. This quarter, we highlight the accomplishments of 273 of our best and brightest Cadets during the George C. Marshall Awards Symposium held in April. We also recognize the top Army ROTC programs in the nation with the presentation of the MacArthur Award to eight college and university battalions.

In an uncertain world, Cadet Command develops the types of leaders that our nation needs. It is absolutely the best leadership program in the world. This summer marks the first official year of the Cadet Command Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency (CULP) program, in which Cadets are deployed to foreign countries to experience cultural and language immersion through humanitarian mission work or training with the host country's military. Since the program's pilot inception in 2006, approximately 348 Cadets have deployed to foreign countries worldwide.

As we move full speed ahead into the commissioning season, our senior Cadets trade in battalion uniforms for gold bars as second lieutenants. I am proud of each one of you.

Your accomplishments speak for themselves. You have managed the challenges of attaining a degree with the rigors of preparing for commissioning. Along the way, you have developed as a leader, and I know you will contribute to the continued success of our Army. We expect you to lead, accomplish your mission and take care of your Soldiers. Remember always that you are a leader of character. Live the Army Values and obey the Solder's Creed.

For those of you who remain in your Cadet battalions, summer represents a time of growth and transformation as you prepare for our Leader's Training Course and Leader Development and Assessment Course. As you drive on, train hard, be the best you can be, stay safe, and remember that a leader's training never ends. Train to lead!

Maj. Gen. Arthur M. Bartell
Commanding General
U.S. Army Cadet Command

Counseling a vital tool for growth

NCOs have many tools to cultivate leaders



Our NCO Corps is truly the backbone of Cadet Command. Whether on active duty, working in or out of the universities or retired and working at one of our JROTC programs, accomplishing the mission is what we are all about. We have many superior NCOs. It takes at least six or seven years to grow a good NCO. It takes at least 12 years to grow a superior NCO.

In the past two months Cadet Command superior NCOs moved a lot of big pieces; NCO of the Year board, spring FTXs, summer training preparation, master drill competitions and a national air rifle competition.

Even as these great Americans moved these pieces around, the superior NCOs also took care of one seemingly small and simple thing that cumulatively has a great impact. That small thing is effective counseling. It is our job to turn our Cadets into great leaders. Superior NCOs take a minimum of 12 years to grow. In turn, our superior NCOs are trying to prepare college

kids to lead a platoon in a fraction of that time: four years.

Our job as NCOs is to teach, coach and mentor our young Cadets to be leaders of leaders. We set the stakes, or trellis, to give their growth direction.

One key part of setting that direction is effective counseling. Without it, our Cadets, like young plants, might not follow the stakes or trellis, and the fruit they bear will lay on the ground and rot.

Superior NCOs do not let this happen. They know effective counseling helps Cadets grow on the right azimuth.

Superior NCOs know if we only use counseling to document negative actions, if we don't put our hands on a Cadet's growth process through counseling, we are just filling out the counseling form.

I want all you superior NCOs to continue to challenge, grow, and mentor our young Cadets into fruit-bearing leaders who can in turn lead young NCOs and cultivate those NCOs into Superior NCOs.

Command Sgt. Maj. Hershel L. Turner
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army Cadet Command

Annual memorial march draws 330

GATLINBURG, Tenn. — Some 330 people participated April 17 in the third annual Mountain Man Memorial March.

The University of Tennessee ROTC Rocky Top Battalion hosted the event in Gatlinburg. The march served to honor 2005 UT alumnus 1st Lt. Frank Walkup, who was killed in Iraq in 2007.

The event began April 16 with a ceremony to honor Gold Star families. In attendance was Romaine McGinnis, mother of Spc. Ross McGinnis, the nation's most recent Medal of Honor winner, as well as 20 other families representing Soldiers and Marines lost in conflicts dating back to Vietnam.

Marchers attended from schools as far north as Michigan and active duty military units from the Southeast. Marchers had the option of competing in a 6.5-mile, 13.1-mile or 26.2-mile category in either a civilian athletic, military light or military heavy category.

The winning heavy team was Appalachian State. It finished in six hours, 55 minutes.

The march was designed to promote synergy among various commands, with the host UT



More than 300 people take off from the starting line at the third annual Mountain Man March in Gatlinburg, Tenn. The march served to honor 2005 University of Tennessee ROTC Rocky Top Battalion alumnus 1st Lt. Frank Walkup, who was killed in Iraq in 2007. Photo contributed

ROTC battalion securing assets and support from the Knoxville recruiting company, the Tennessee Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve.

Several civic and veteran organizations provided additional support through financial donations, food and service products and store discounts. The local VFW chapter provided a daylong barbecue for all the working Cadets and cadre, as well as the finishing marchers.

More than 20 media outlets covered the event, generating additional publicity for the march and the ROTC program. Donations and a percentage of the earnings totaling more than \$2,500 went to the Wounded Warrior Project.

7th Brigade

Cadets volunteer with elementary school students

EL PASO, Ill. — An idea spawned by a Soldier's mom has grown to a program that involves two elementary schools, about 20 ROTC Cadets and a lieutenant colonel.

Every Friday at Jefferson Park Elementary School this school year, Cadets from the Reserve Officers' Training Corps at Illinois State University read, played games and helped students learn.

"The Cadets achieve something

and tell others," said Lt. Col. Raymond Hart, the Illinois State professor of military science.

Third-grade teacher Mary Sadoun started the program after her son, now with the Army in Iraq, took part in a similar program in El Paso, Texas.

"It's rewarding to see the impact the other Cadets and I have on the children," Cadet Monica Mammarella said.

3rd Brigade

An unlikely reunion

TIKRIT, Iraq — An unlikely reunion occurred recently on Contingency Operating Base Speicher for seven Wheaton College ROTC alumni who discovered they were all deployed to the same location despite serving in different units.

"The raw probability of seven people from the same school of 2,400 students to end up at the same base, at the same time is remarkable," said Capt. Timothy Erickson, an attorney with the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

The officers earned their commissions from 1998-2008 and range in rank from first lieutenant to major.

Wheaton commissions about 20 Cadets a year. All seven alumni credit Wheaton ROTC for developing them

as leaders. The "Wheaton 7" treasure the mentorship provided by their cadre.

"The example that they set for us as young, impressionable Cadets stays with us to this day," Capt. Paily Eapen said.

The bonds they built as Cadets have allowed them to maintain lasting friendships, making the deployment a little easier, they said.

Iraq

Gen. Petraeus speaks to Princeton Cadets and answers questions

Gen. David Petraeus, U.S. Central Command commander and former commander of multi-national forces in Iraq, spoke to nearly 40 2nd Brigade Cadets during a recent visit to Princeton University.

Besides meeting with the Cadets, Petraeus was at the school Feb. 19-20 to receive the James Madi-

son Medal, one of Princeton's top honors for its alumni.

The general, who holds a Ph.D from the school, spoke to Cadets about the importance of education, stepping out of their intellectual comfort zones and the importance of ROTC. He also emphasized the "privilege" of leading American Soldiers and spent time fielding a variety of leadership and tactical questions from Cadets.

At the end of the session, Petraeus posed for photos with Cadets and cadre and signed a few autographs in books that were brought.

Lt. Col. John Stark, the Princeton professor of military science, and four selected Cadets joined Petraeus in morning PT Feb. 20. The general led the group on a run of nearly five miles, followed by more than a half-hour of push-ups, sit-ups and stretching exercises that challenged all of those in the group.

Later that day, in accepting the Madison Medal, Petraeus praised the Princeton ROTC program to members of the school's faculty.



Gen. David Petraeus, U.S. Army Central Command commander, speaks to more than three dozen Cadets from four schools at the University of Princeton in late February. Photo submitted

2nd Brigade



Dr. Eddie Moore Jr., president of Virginia State University, receives the Gen. William DePuy Award for 2010, presented by Brig. Gen. Arnold Gordon-Bray, deputy commanding general for U.S. Army Cadet Command. Photo by George Whitley

Command awards highest honor to two

Retired Col. James Pritzker and Dr. Eddie Moore Jr. receive DePuy Award

Two former officers who remain strong advocates for ROTC have received U.S. Army Cadet Command's highest individual honor.

Retired Col. James Pritzker and Dr. Eddie Moore Jr. recently received the Gen. William DePuy Award for 2009 and 2010, respectively.

Both awards were given by Brig. Gen. Arnold Gordon-Bray, Cadet Command's deputy commanding general.

Pritzker is founder and president of the Chicago-based Pritzker Military Library, Tawani Foundation and Tawani Enterprises.

For almost three decades, Pritzker has been a leader in supporting opportunities for young people involved in both the junior and senior Army ROTC programs. He has provided awards through the Tawani Foundation, exposure for Cadets to professional and leadership opportunities through his military library and made numerous donations to the JROTC programs in the Chicago area so Cadets could participate in such activities as summer camps and field trips.

Moore has been a strong advocate for Army

ROTC since taking over as president of Virginia State University in 1993. His accomplishments involving ROTC include being a catalyst for multi-million dollar renovations to several campus fitness and athletic facilities, providing Cadets ideal environments in which to train, ushering in a plan for VSU to provide matching room and board scholarships to Cadets receiving ROTC scholarships and providing help financially to Cadets needing money to purchase textbooks and meals.

The DePuy Award was created in 2005 by Cadet Command to honor an individual who has provided significant support to the local or national ROTC program. It is named for the first commander of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, an Army ROTC graduate and strong supporter of the program.

Fort Monroe

Cadet Command news online

The Cadet Command Public Affairs Office publishes news from around the command online. For up-to-date news and features, go to <http://cadetcommand.armylive.dodlive.mil>. You can also become a fan of our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cadetcommand.

Basketball standout believes in service

Many people at her school know about the impressive shooting and enthusiastic play of junior basketball standout Sam Ramirez, but there is a side to her many do not know.

Away from the court, the criminal justice major is spending her time as part of the Appalachian State ROTC program.

The Fayetteville, N.C., native grew up in a household that put a great deal of importance on the military and service.

Ramirez plans on following in her father's footsteps by going into the Army after graduation.

"I'm going to go active when I graduate, and then I plan to be an officer for the military police," she said.



Sam Ramirez

many opportunities for herself in the future.

"There's going to be a lot of doors for her to walk through, and it's just a matter of which one she will choose," Vincent said.

Teammates are quick to point out how her commitment makes her different. They also praise her achievements and self-discipline required to be successful in basketball and ROTC.

Appalachian State head coach Darcie Vincent knows she

is opening up

4th Brigade

Top programs recognized with MacArthur Awards

By George Whitley
U.S. Army Cadet Command

FORT MONROE, Va. — Eight Army Reserve Officers’ Training Corps programs were honored in February as the top units in the nation.

The winners of the 2010 MacArthur Awards were announced at the annual U.S. Army Cadet Command Winter Commander’s Conference. The awards, given to one battalion per Army ROTC brigade, recognize unit performance based on the ideals of the late-Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

This year’s winners were: 1st Brigade, North Georgia College & State University, Dahlonega, Ga.; 2nd Brigade, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, N.Y.; 3rd Brigade, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, N.D.; 4th Brigade, Campbell University, Buies Creek, N.C.; 5th Brigade, Cameron University, Lawton, Okla.; 6th Brigade, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Ga.; 7th Brigade, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati; and 8th Brigade, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, Calif.



A Cadet from Santa Clara University moves to a position during a training exercise. Santa Clara won the 8th Brigade MacArthur Award. Photo by Ryan Selewicz/The Santa Clara

Cadet Command, the parent organization of Army ROTC, in conjunction with the Norfolk, Va.-based General Douglas MacArthur Foundation, has presented the awards each year since 1989.

“The awards recognize the individual units within the Army ROTC program that have

achieved the standards that best represent the ideals of the watch words of ‘duty, honor, country’ as practiced by General MacArthur,” said retired Marine Corps Col. William J. Davis, the foundation’s executive director.

Cadet Command’s commanding general, Maj. Gen. Arthur M. Bartell, thanked Davis and the foundation for supporting Army ROTC over the years with the awards and for keeping MacArthur’s legacy alive.

“It means a lot to the schools to receive this award, and it is the pinnacle for the brigade leadership represented here today,” Bartell said. “Again, on behalf of the 35,000 Cadets within the

command, I want to thank you for your continuing support of the Army ROTC program.”

One of the brigade commanders attending the event reflected on his MacArthur award-winning unit.

“As the brigade commander of the Rochester In-

continued on page 21

JROTC drill season sees repeat and new champs

U.S. Army Cadet Command

Familiar champions took titles in the Western and Eastern Drill Championships during March, but new winners emerged as well in the JROTC competitions.

The events were preludes to the national meet being held this month in Daytona Beach, Fla. Results will be reported in the fall edition of The Cadet.

In the Western meet at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, perennial power and hometown program Douglas MacArthur High School repeated as armed champion on the masters level. Winston Churchill High School, another San Antonio program, won the masters level unarmed division.

On the challenge level, designed for more inexperienced JROTC programs, St. John’s Northwestern Military Academy, of Delafield, Wis., which had not attended a drill meet in more than 10 years, won the overall title in the armed division. Claiming the challenge level’s unarmed division was Pekin Community High School, of Pekin, Ill. The trip to San Antonio marked Pekin’s first foray into a regional drill meet.

St. John’s Northwestern and Pekin traveled farther to attend the meet, held at the Alamodome,



JROTC Cadets compete at the Army national air rifle competition. Photo by George Whitley

than any of the other teams in the competition.

St. John’s Northwestern’s Diego Gonzalez, the team’s commander who has been with the team for three years, knew the practices leading up to competing again would be hard and the competition would be tough. He said a desire to get the school involved again in competitions was the team’s goal this year.

“We came here to try our best,” he said. “We practiced all year long and didn’t know what to expect.”

Francis Lewis High School of Fresh Meadows, N.Y., extended its winning streak to five in the

armed portion of the Eastern meet in Macon, Ga. But the school’s unarmed team came up short in its bid for a fifth straight crown, overtaken by North Miami Beach Senior High School, a newcomer to the region event.

The Florida school had competed on the national level, but was able to raise enough money to venture north before the season-ending meet in May in Daytona Beach, Fla. And it paid off.

Somewhat to the surprise of North Miami’s coach and senior Army instructor, Maj. Michael Rountree.

“Every time you compete in anything, everything has to line up for you,” he said. “Sometimes that doesn’t happen.”

The Lady Chargers’ victory was significant, considering that both of Francis Lewis’ teams had distanced themselves competitively from their Eastern foes in recent years. The armed and unarmed groups had finished worse than first in only a handful of the meet categories — regulation, exhibition, color guard and inspection — since 2006. Overall, the Lady Chargers beat the Patriot Pride by 147 points, scoring 3,803 of a possible 4,000.

Rountree credited his Cadets’ dedication, as well as the North Miami JROTC staff and school ad-

continued on page 21

Testing their skills

Cadet Command’s non-commissioned officers go head-to-head in skills competition



Sgt. 1st Class Eugene Brown, of Stetson University, adjusts his sights while zeroing his weapon during the Cadet Command NCO of the Year competition at Fort Sill, Okla. Photo by Terry Mann

By Terry Mann
U.S. Army Cadet Command

FORT SILL, Okla. — Under a moonless night, a prairie leads toward boulder-strewn gullies and creeks covered by low-hanging tree limbs and brushy shrubs that surround jagged foothills like a moat. There are no paths or trails where five contestants search for blue-colored markers in the dark.

Rattlesnakes, wild boars and raccoons are their companions this night. Not even the stars cast a glimmer of light through the foliage.

The contestants were Army ROTC cadre competing in early April in the night land navigation portion of Cadet Command’s NCO of the Year competition — and arguably its most challenging.

With only a compass and terrain map, they had less than three hours to find four markers scattered across a few hundred acres in the darkness of Fort Sill’s back-country training ranges.

As an infantryman and Ranger, Staff Sgt. Russell Kojo knew he had the skills compete.

He also knew the playing field had some fierce competition, including his former squad leader while assigned to Charlie Co., 75th Ranger Regiment.

“The terrain was very difficult, and there were a few different markers at each location,” Kojo said.

While counting paces and navigating through the brush on the night land navigation course, Kojo focused on the task at hand — finding the markers with correct grid location. And that focus paid off, helping the staff sergeant win the overall competition.

As Cadet Command’s NCO of the Year, Kojo will represent the command at the Accessions Command level in May. The winner of that competition moves on to TRADOC this summer and then to the Department of the Army level this fall.

In the few months leading up to the Cadet Command competition, Kojo juggled his responsibilities as an ROTC instructor who teaches freshmen and sophomores Cadets at the University of California–Berkeley. He also kept up with his pursuit of an associate’s degree while studying and training for the

NCOY competition.

He pored through and quizzed himself on the Army Study Guide. His fellow Cadre members peppered him with questions about Army history, regulations, warrior tasks, the NCO Creed and situational scenarios typical of NCO boards. When training Cadets in the field or on land navigation, Kojo wore a loaded rucksack for extra training and motivation.

“It’s because of the people of where I came from before and my new command I maintain focus and push myself. I don’t want to let them down. That’s what keeps me motivated on days I don’t want to run or work out,” said Kojo, who has been with U.S. Army Cadet Command for nine months.

His focus and determination paid off. Kojo won Cadet Command’s NCOY competition that tested Soldiers skills in five events and a board appearance before seven command sergeants major.

“I was a little nervous about some questions, especially the questions I didn’t know. I

continued on page 20

High Viz

*Lakewood High's
Junior ROTC makes
its mark on military
community*

By Jeremy O'Bryan

U.S. Army Cadet Command

LAKEWOOD, Wash. – Lakes High School seems hidden from view. The school sits in a wooded Washington state neighborhood between a large military base and West Coast salt-water.

The Pacific Northwest environment is poised to obscure the school: the hyperactive military base, leading-edge technology companies, a healthy tourism industry, a metro-area population of 4.3 million people.

But 200 of the school's 1,500 students ensure Lakes doesn't get lost. The Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps is one of the most visible components of the local military and civilian communities.

In fact, Lakes' JROTC is so connected to the community that, come celebration or natural disaster, its involvement is almost assured.

"The community here knows who these kids are," said retired Lt. Col. Gerald Rosenbaum, the senior Army instructor for the battalion and a 26-year Army veteran.

Rosenbaum's second is retired Master Sgt. Frederick Dumas, a former Army Band member who retired six years ago and was teaching airborne school at Fort Benning, Ga., the only Army Band member ever to do so.

Dumas said he and the colonel encourage the Cadets at Lakes to dig in and "do."

"The problem is we can only be in so many places at one time," he said.

On Veteran's Day, the Lakes Cadets posted the colors at eight different events in the region, with only the two teachers driving.

Posting the colors at local events and operating its own incident command system are two of the corps' activities that bracket dozens of others more or less complex. But whatever the Cadets are doing – they are doing. Their teachers, with 65 years of Army and teaching experience between them, advise – and then let them work.

Lakes' corps is the largest Army JROTC program in western Washington. They invite smaller programs, even Air Force programs, to their training camps, doing all the planning themselves.

Rosenbaum said the program has a good balance of leaders and learners.

The most significant activity Lakes' Cadets are known for is their incident command system, which supports Pierce County and Joint Base Lewis-McChord in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. About 40 Cadets are trained by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as volunteers to assist local emergency management authorities with evacuation, radio operations, data collection and entry, site logistics and security.

They stay current in these tasks by rehearsing in drills twice a year with military and county officials.

The group is also involved in school crisis planning. In the event of an emergency at the school, the JROTC's portable classroom becomes a command center.

COMMUNITY

In 2002, Lakes Cadets established "a collective effort between student leadership and instructors to combat apathy" within the corps. The ongoing "battle plan" was designed to fight factors that contribute to dropping out and academic and social under-achievement.

The Cadets made a list of more than 60 "enemies" of student success, then began designing plans to attack each one individually using "curriculum attacks" and "activity attacks."

"Whether the problem a student has is 'no money' or 'no future,' there are solutions that we can develop to address specific causes," Rosenbaum said. "The school district asked us to consider running a community event around our 'War on Apathy' to assist in getting other local schools involved. The kids are interested in doing it, so we'll see."

A key component in the War on Apathy is replacing an "enemy" with a positive activity. Opportunities abound.

The battalion walks every year for diabetes research. The boys are walking – in women's shoes – to support "Walk a Mile In Her Shoes," a local walk against domestic violence. Some Cadets have created a "Little Kid Drill Team," so they can spend time mentoring younger children whose family members have deployed to Iraq.

The program had 274 students last year. The loss of a teacher meant a sacrifice. They only made room for 200 students for the 2009-10 school year.

Still, two teachers for 200 students makes management tricky, but the students manage themselves well, creating lasting community service programs on their own. The more experienced Cadets manage the less experienced ones; leadership is at the heart of what a Cadet learns and does.

Ask any Lakes Cadet to describe their corps, and you'll hear them talk about family.

"When you go through the challenge and stress of planning events and practicing for competitions," said Dennis Wise, the battalion's Cadet commander who is in his third year of Army JROTC, "you really become more like family than friends."

"We have our classes during school, but a lot of the things we do happen after school and on the weekends. We come in to hang out and

have fun. It's something that keeps us really close. If one of us has an idea about an event, someone else says, 'I'll help you' and so others are brought in – even those who aren't in JROTC will come out and help us."

Seventy percent of the students in the program are from military families. This fact, Veronica Wright points out, is the main reason the Lakes corps works so well together.

Wright left the military base here before her freshman year, moving to Alabama to stay with her uncle while her father deployed to Iraq. She joined Air Force JROTC as a way to find herself.

"When I got back the next year, I chose to come to Lakes and join the battalion," Wright said. "We see military kids come and go all the time."

Because of the nomadic nature of the military family, they are accustomed to working through the challenge of changing faces.

What else causes the jelling effect that makes these Cadets like family?

"Showing up," Kevin Mills said. Creating more team-based activities. Everyone has a responsibility and in doing that grow closer together.

"We don't care about just getting the gold star," Mills said, referring to the highest honor given to units during command inspections. "We'll take it, but we don't let the gold star define us. At drill competitions we're there as a team, but we don't just stay in our own huddle. We reach out and talk to people to show them that we care about the meet as much as we care about winning."

All the doing creates an arms open attitude.

"We don't want just to do well by ourselves," said Emily Pelous, a Lakes senior. "We want our battalion to do well."

READY FOR CHALLENGES

Pelous attended basic training last summer as the only trainee who had just turned 17. She had joined the Army Reserves.

"The Army is a big team," Pelous said. "No matter where you go you're going to make family. I wanted to be part of that family."

Pelous' dad, who she looks to for strength, was deployed to Iraq when she left for basic. He wasn't available to support her. She knew basic training was going to be tough.

"I needed my dad there to be like, 'It'll be OK,' " she said. "But my mom was there, she was crying and my boyfriend showed up that morning."

"I got there the same day that I left home, it was like 7 o'clock at night when I got to Fort Jackson (S.C.), getting yelled at and I'm like, 'Oh, my God. This never happened in Junior ROTC.' "

Early on, basic training was difficult mentally and emotionally for Pelous.

"I called my mom the first time I could and I was crying my eyes out and I said 'I want to go home. I don't think I can do this,' and my mom said, 'I can get you out of there,' and I said, 'No, but I have to do this to prove to myself. I don't want to be here, but I know I can do it,' " she said.

"My senior drill sergeant called me into his office. ... He said, 'You can do this. I have faith in you, and I know you're the youngest one here. But you can do this.' To have him take his rank off and put his drill sergeant hat away, that pushed me. That's what proved to me that I could do it."

Pelous said it was the Lakes corps that set her

In 2002, Lakes Cadets established "a collective effort between student leadership and instructors to combat apathy" within the corps.

up for the success she enjoyed in basic training. She had already learned how use a map, how to rappel and some of the other tasks taught at basic training.

She said the other basic trainees – all older – were always talking about her. She was able to help those who needed it and get help from those who could provide it. That's what stands out to her.

Pelous said they'll remember each other for help they gave and received trying to make it through at the difficult training.

This is the kind of teamwork Rosenbaum and Dumas facilitate every day. To reach out. To pull up those around you. To know when it's important to be pulled up yourself.

"You're going to make family in ROTC," Wright said. "We don't want to see each other fail. If another Cadet fails, I feel like I failed in my job. I'm supposed to be helping."

"Our teachers give us some percentage of support: ideas, suggestions," Pelous said. "The Cadets make it happen. We are 100 percent 'do.' "

Shining stars

*George C. Marshall Cadets hear from the top
Army leaders during three-day seminar*

Story by Steve Arel
U.S. Army Cadet Command

George C. Marshall Cadets
gather on the campus of Wash-
ington and Lee University during
the 2010 George C. Marshall
ROTC Awards Seminar in Lex-
ington, Va. Photo by Forrest
Berkshire

Like her ROTC colleagues, Lorraine Rodriguez decided to pursue a commission as a second lieutenant for one reason: deployment, not employment.

Also like many of her colleagues, the Florida International University Cadet sees herself as part of the next generation of America's freedom protectors.

"Someone has to do it," she said. "Why not me?"

continued on page 10



Jaron Jones, of Wentworth Military Academy, reads about the life of Gen. George C. Marshall in the museum bearing the general's name at VMI. The desk in the display is the one Marshall used at the U.S. War Department. Photo by Forrest Berkshire

continued from page 8

As they prepare to embark on careers as commissioned leaders, the top Cadets from each Army ROTC program nationwide were named recipients last month of the 2010 George C. Marshall Awards. The honor not only spotlighted the achievements of the students, but it also gave them a chance to hear directly from senior leadership — including the chief of staff of the Army — and to exchange dialogue in roundtable discussions with Soldiers who have lived the lives they are about to.

In the awards' 33rd year, 273 award winners ventured to the campus of Virginia Military Institute, the alma mater of the award's namesake, for a three-day leadership seminar. The event, held from April 14-16, was designed to build on the foundation of military education of Army ROTC's elite performers by teaming them with Soldiers and civilians looking to share their experiences.

"I was given an opportunity, and I never turn down an opportunity," said Chris Soik of the Colorado School of Mines.

The seminar focused on the principles of the late George C. Marshall, the famed former general of the Army and United States secretary of state during World War II whose plan for reconstructing a war-torn Europe garnered him the Nobel peace prize.

In applauding the Marshall winners on their achievements, Maj. Gen. Arthur Bartell said the Cadets would carry on the traditions established by Marshall.

"You have stepped up and answered the nation's call to duty, and you will face trials and adversity as leaders," the commanding general of U.S. Army Cadet Command said. "But it is important

to understand the difference between 'getting through' vs. 'growing through' struggles. Every hardship carries with it a seed of equal or greater benefit.

"Like George C. Marshall, use these experiences to develop yourselves and those you lead."

In many ways, the seminar set the stage for the environment Cadets will enter as leaders of Soldiers.

Facing a future rife with unpredictability, the one certainty Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey knows Marshall winners will encounter throughout the infancy of their careers is a period of "persistent conflict." He said he expects American troops to spend at least the next decade thwarting threats around the world.

"These are ruthless men and women," he said, referring to terrorist groups and non-state organizations intent on furthering their agendas through violence and intimidation.

"They're going to have to be beaten. It's going to be a long-term struggle."

Speaking to the Cadets on the campus of Washington and Lee University, which neighbors VMI, Casey outlined the Army they will soon join, detailed the transforming force and spotlighted the environment that will challenge the new officers' mettle.

This was the third year the chief of staff has addressed Marshall winners. And each year, he is blunt about what Cadets will face.

But Casey also is direct about their potential for success in an organization that is the "best in the world at what it does."

"You'll be welcomed into an Army at war," he said. "That speaks volumes for your character and

commitment to this great country."

Cadets, meanwhile, await the challenges.

Western Kentucky University Cadet Aaron Arflack spent five years as a non-commissioned officer, including time in Iraq, before pursuing a commission. He was assigned with fellow U.S. Soldiers at Abu Ghraib prison about six years ago as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

As he prepares to re-enter the ranks as an officer, Arflack said his experience would prove beneficial in that he knows, from an NCO perspective, what to expect from a platoon leader. However, the demands of leading Soldiers as a second lieutenant pose a host of different challenges.

The transition won't "be flawless," he said. "There's still a lot to learn. Nothing can really prepare you for that. You just have to step into it and trust your NCOs to guide you right."

For many Cadets, the seminar was a reunion of sorts. They reconnected with students with whom they had attended training, such as the Leadership Development and Assessment Course, or had met in other ROTC settings.

Many Cadets said, as much as anything, they relished the chance to simply exchange stories and ideas about leadership with colleagues.

For Peter Nickoloff of Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., the experience gave him new perspective on success.

"I've learned things and gained insight as to how to be successful," he said. "What this has done is give me confidence that I've had success so far.

This (award) is assurance that I've done some things right, and I can continue to build on that."

Others said exposure to proven leaders and lessons learned at the seminar will smooth their



George C. Marshall Cadets watch a pass in review parade by Virginia Military Institute Cadets in the awardees' honor. Photo by Forrest Berkshire

transition from Cadet to second lieutenant.

Cristin Sanders of Morgan State University said she expects the experience to give her an edge over colleagues who didn't attend.

"I've had good cadre members who have shown us how to be leaders," she said. "This reinforced what they've taught."



Sgt. Maj. James McGruder, Cadet Command's training sergeant major, and Capt. Holly Ishman, Cadet Command 4th Brigade nurse counselor, talk to Cadets about the role of the officer/NCO relationship at the George C. Marshall ROTC Awards Seminar held on the grounds of Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Va., April 14-16. Photo by Forrest Berkshire

By Forrest Berkshire

U.S. Army Cadet Command

LEXINGTON, Va. — A platoon leader is a lot like a parent. He or she must set the example for the family to follow and take responsibility for the well-being of their charges.

This was one of many messages senior non-commissioned officers and officers relayed to Cadets at a series of roundtable discussions as part of the George C. Marshall Awards and Leadership Seminar at Virginia Military Institute.

The job of a platoon officer is to be a leader, not a friend, to his Soldiers.

"Keep yourself separated," Sgt. 1st Class Nevin Gamble advised Cadets at his session. "Privates are going to test you. They are going to try to be your friends. When they suck you into that hole, they will take advantage of you."

Sgt. Maj. James McGruder said one area he has seen platoon leaders get in trouble is mix-

Practical advice

Cadets on the eve of commissioning hear real-life lessons from senior leaders

ing alcohol and their platoon's Soldiers. He said Soldiers are always watching their leader, whether it is in the field or in the club. And if they see their platoon leader getting drunk in public, when they get into trouble involving alcohol, whether it be fighting or driving while intoxicated, it makes it harder for the platoon leader to take disciplinary action.

"Don't go where Joe goes," Gamble said.

"They will throw it back in your face," McGruder said.

Leading by example was just one of many issues two NCOs and an officer talked to each group about during the Role of the Platoon Leader and NCO sessions, which every Marshall Cadet was required to attend. Most of the time during the informal setting was devoted to fielding any questions the Cadets cared to ask.

Cadets could choose from a plethora of topics ranging from the escalating security challenges in Africa to an officer's ethics.

Some topics included balancing an officer's

responsibilities with family life, ensuring enlisted Soldiers' families are a priority, knowing when to take the lead and when to delegate duties to the platoon sergeant and how to manage their own careers, as well as the careers of their Soldiers.

"What really struck me was them talking about how you're basically the father to your platoon," said Robert Gallimore, the George C. Marshall winner from University of Tennessee-Martin.

Gallimore said he appreciated the forthrightness of the roundtable leaders.

"They made it very clear what we need to know," he said.

Cadet Robin Hofer, from Oregon State University, said the informal environment set the right mood for Cadets to ask the questions they might have been uncomfortable asking in more formal circumstances.

"It was always a very straightforward answer," she said. "And they made sure they answered the question."

Marching in memoriam

*ROTC turns out in force for annual
Bataan Memorial Death March
honoring World War II survivors*

Participants in the Bataan Memorial Death March
make their way through the New Mexico desert. *Photo
by Terry Mann*

By Terry Mann

U.S. Army Cadet Command

WHITE SANDS, N.M. — Nearly 70 years have passed since the brutal Bataan Death March. Time has claimed the lives of many of the survivors of the forced march of United States and allied prisoners of war in the Philippines during World War II.

During the 21st Bataan Memorial Death March competition held March 21, nearly 5,700 people marched to remember and honor the survivors of the actual march. Among the participants were Army ROTC Cadets from more than 30 campuses that competed in the living-history event staged in the expansive White Sands Missile Range.

Cadets were greeted by an unusually cold morning as they assembled for the start of the competition. With temperatures hovering a few degrees above freezing, many stood shivering to ward off the chill as they were dressed for a long, hot day running, marching or walking. The day and the Cadets warmed up as the miles wore on.

The day before the race featured a historical symposium, movies and discussion groups led by some of the remaining Bataan survivors, where they shared their experiences during the

war and as POWs.

Before the 26.2-mile marathon, the veterans, now in their late 80s and early 90s, greeted participants at the starting line. They remained throughout the day and congratulated the competitors at the finish and during an awards ceremony.

“It’s a powerful thing meeting the survivors. It adds an element of pride in doing this,” said Cadet Ryan Ball, a senior at the University of Missouri. He carried the dog tags of his wife’s grandfather, Edward C. Greer, a Bataan Death March survivor, during the competition.

“This is a lifetime event for a military guy to compete in at least once,” Ball said.

The memorial competition featured civilian and military team divisions and individual categories. The Colorado State University Ram Battalion won the ROTC heavy competition with a time of five hours, 45 minutes, 20 seconds. The University of Texas-El Paso Fighting Miners Battalion took the ROTC light division in 5:04:57.

Participants walked, ran and jogged on a dusty, rocky trail, snaking through the desert unfolding before the Organ Mountain range of New Mexico. The military division featured individual, light and heavy categories. The heavy division required a rucksack weighing at

least 35 pounds. Competitors in the military divisions had to forgo high-tech footgear and sportswear designed for comfort and rough terrain. They had to wear combat boots and ACU field uniforms.

“Winning the ROTC light division was really special. This same group also won the Ranger Challenge last year,” UTEP Cadet Xavier Lombardo said.

For motivation and focus during the race, Lombardo wrote “World War II” on his boots.

“It was incredibly humbling meeting the Bataan veterans before the race...on mile 23 when you’re tired and sore and want to quit, you think of them and what they went through ...you shook their hand at the start of the race ... finishing is a way of honoring and respecting them,” CSU Cadet Nathan Seitz said.

A unique training regime developed by team captain Scott Geers propelled the Ram Battalion to first.

“We did 16- and 25-mile marches with 50-pound rucks,” Seitz said. “We also did eight-mile marches with the rucks while carrying water jugs.”

In addition to the military competitors, many wounded warriors completed the march along with teams from across the nation repre-

senting law enforcement, fire departments, corporations, charities, marathon running groups and other civilian organizations. The event had international flavor, with some participants traveling from Brazil, Germany, Canada, Britain and Australia.

One ROTC battalion drove 26 hours through the night – alternating designated drivers. After completing the marathon, the Cadets from St. Cloud State University and the College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University located in Collegeville, Minn., began their 26-hour trip home in hopes of being at class Tuesday morning.

“We hope we can continue participating in this event, though funding is a challenge,” said Cadet Adam Larson of St. John’s “Fighting Saints” Battalion. “This is the best extra-curricular event we do.”

With snow-capped ranges looming in the distance, the competitors challenged themselves to travel 26.2 miles, slightly less than half the actual distance of the forced march in 1942, to replicate the experience endured by the “Battling Bastards of Bataan.” During the Bataan Death March, there was little to no food, only days of forced marches under brutal conditions and a constant fear of death.

“This was a lot harder than airborne school where you only have to conquer your fears,” said Cadet Cheyanne Walsh from the Cowboy Battalion at the University of Wyoming. “Here, you have to conquer your mind and your body. It really hurts around 22 miles, but you have to just get through it. The last four miles are the hardest.”

Walsh competed as an individual and placed seventh overall in the female military category. She finished fourth in her age group for 20- to 29-year-olds in the female individual category.

By symbolically trudging in the footsteps of those who came before them, the Cadets hoped to keep the spirit of Bataan veterans alive.

“It’s an honorable thing to pay respect to the memory of the Bataan veterans and survivors,” said University of Missouri Cadet Alexander Jenkins said. He also carried the memory of his grandfather, an Army veteran who recently passed away, with him during the race.

Mizzou Tiger Battalion Cadets Clark Maynard and Andrew Lang finished first and second, respectively, in the 19 and younger category. They finished 39th and 40th overall, while Ball finished 41st. Jenkins finished 60th overall.

The course took its toll on even the most experienced marathoners and physically fit military competitors. The rocky trail wound up and down foothills and steep slopes, which led to a dried riverbed.

The riverbed was the course trail for most of



Bataan Death March survivor Tony Reyna, 95, inspects a coin presented by White Sands Missile Range Commander Brig. Gen. John S. Regan. Reyna spent three and a half years as a POW after the Bataan Death March in 1942. He attended the 21st Annual Bataan Memorial Death March. *Photo by Terry Mann*

the last five miles of the course. The sandy bottom proved challenging for tired and sore competitors to negotiate.

“The last five miles were horrible,” Seitz said. “It was like walking through hell with a rucksack. Every step was like walking through water with rock feet. Your feet sunk into the sand and the added weight of the ruck made it worse.”

After completing the marathon, the CSU team rode on a bus through the night to be at classes Monday morning. That following Thursday, the battalion headed to the plains of

Wyoming for a three-day field training exercise.

“It’s inspirational seeing Cadets out here enduring this course. It gives hope for the future generations to remember Bataan,” said Lt. Col. Andrew Taylor, professor of military science at New Mexico State University.

As a Cadet in 1989 at New Mexico State University, he participated in the inaugural Bataan Memorial Death March. The NMSU ROTC founded the event in 1989. Twenty-one years later, he led his Cadets through the course.

Louisville shows mettle against international and West Point teams

WEST POINT, N.Y. – An Army ROTC team might not have won the overall crown at this year's Sandhurst Military Skills Competition, but they proved to be dogged competitors.

The University of Louisville Cardinal battalion's nine-member squad was the top team among the eight Army ROTC entries and took seventh place overall.

"Our team worked so well together on the course that we were able to get over any minor problems we had quite quickly," said Cadet Jordon Shontz, Louisville's team captain. "Our ROTC battalion cadre did a great job in getting the team materials so that we could train hard for this competition."

The two-day event, held April 9-10, was best described by a spectator as a military version of the TV show *The Amazing Race*, but with M-16 rifles. The Army's U.S. Military Academy at West Point hosts the annual competition on its maneuver area in the scenic Hudson River Valley region of central New York state.

Louisville was among 49 teams from West Point and other ROTC teams representing Air Force and Navy programs. An international group including teams from Canada, Great Britain, Chile and Afghanistan also participated.

The other Army ROTC teams competing were from the University of Washington, George Mason University, Virginia Tech, Brigham Young University, Rutgers University, University of North Dakota and University of Central Florida.

Individual team honors went to George Mason for logging the fastest time of all teams on the Commandant's Challenge portion of the course. In that event, each team had to figure out how to move a large military truck tire over a course as fast as possible using the equipment available.

"We felt like we were well prepared as a team for this year's Sandhurst competition by making the best use of the training facilities we had available to us in the Fairfax, Va., area," said George Mason's team leader, Cadet Jason Seifert. "We definitely know what we have to improve on as a team for next year."

BYU, last year's top ROTC team, flourished on the land navigation course by posting the overall best score in the event.

"We trained really hard for this year's competition, and I think we proved that in most of the events," said Cadet Joel Woodruff, BYU's team captain. "It is just not enough to prepare for specific events in these kinds of competitions; you have to be adaptive to each new situation you encounter."

The annual contest was started at West Point in 1967 when the British Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst presented a sword to the U.S. academy to use as a prize for a military competition to promote excellence among Cadets.

This year's Sandhurst challenge started with Cadets on the rifle range firing M-16s for highest squad score.

The second day tested the Cadets' physical conditioning, with the teams heading out on a six-plus-mile land course. The teams navigated between the various stations where they were required to perform a specific military task at each one.

On the second and final day, Cadets' knowledge was tested at land navigation, obstacle courses where their teamwork and leadership abilities were applied, weapons, first aid and other military missions requiring problem-solving techniques.

Cadets from Virginia Tech pilot a Zodiac boat during one obstacle at this year's Sandhurst Military Skills Competition at West Point, N.Y. Photo by Forrest Berkshire



Through the Lens Sandhurst 2010

Photos by Forrest Berkshire

University of Washington Cadets navigate the incline wall during the Leadership Reaction Course of Sandhurst 2010 at West Point, N.Y.



Virginia Tech team members sight down range during the marksmanship portion of the competition.

More photos from Sandhurst 2010 available online at

www.armyrotc.smugmug.com/Sandhurst-2010

University of Louisville Cadets work together to cross a one-rope bridge.



Outside the classroom

Summer presents opportunity to broaden horizons

By Forrest Berkshire
U.S. Army Cadet Command

For many college students summer break is a time to escape the classroom.

But for thousands of ROTC Cadets, every summer the classroom just moves – to real life – whether it be developing their Soldier skills or broadening their worldviews.

Two programs in particular offer Cadets the chance to further their education; the hands-on program that places Cadets in Army schools such as airborne and air assault and a newly established travel-abroad program that sends students all across the world to live and work among other cultures.

This summer, about 425 Cadets will travel to countries in South America, Europe and Asia. Depending on the destination, Cadets will work on humanitarian missions or train with the host country's military for up to 45 days.

"You name a country that's in the news that is not in combat, and we are probably going there," said Ray Causey, manager of the Cadet Command Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency (CULP) program. "The idea is cultural and language immersion."

The program ran as a pilot project from 2006-09. Six Cadets were deployed in 2006; 21 in 2007; 94 in 2008 and 227 in 2009.

This summer marks the first official year of the program. Causey said if funding permits, the program will grow to include 800 Cadets next year and 1,350 in 2012.

The Army is placing more emphasis on Soldiers' language skills and cultural awareness as the force finds itself embroiled in more global deployments. In line with that mission, Cadet Command is placing more emphasis on those attributes as well. The command's eventual goal is for 50 percent of Cadets to experience full immersion and language skills in another culture before they commission as second lieutenants.

"I think every college student should study

abroad," said Jessica Carlock, a North Georgia College and State University Cadet commissioning this spring. "In today's world, we have to be more global citizens. It gives you a lot more confidence in your language skills."

Carlock, a political science major with a minor in French, spent five weeks in summer 2007 studying in Paris. Although it was not through the CULP program, she was able to use her ROTC scholarship to fund the study abroad. She attended classes on the French Revolution on Mondays and Wednesdays, traveled on organized field trips Tuesdays and Thursdays and on the weekends hopped the EuroRail to see the rest of Europe.

That summer she also attended airborne school, like hundreds of other Cadets, to gain hands-on skills.

"It was a busy summer, but well worth it," she said.

Cadets from across the country attend several Army schools every summer.

Airborne is the most widely attended. Every year Cadet Command gets about 1,140 slots set aside for Cadets between May and September. The college students learn side-by-side with active duty Soldiers to earn those qualifications.

Cadets can also gain slots at air assault, mountain warfare, northern warfare and sapper schools, among others.

Donald MacWillie, a Texas A&M Cadet commissioning this spring, attended airborne training in 2007 and the first phase of the Mountain Warfare Course in 2008.

"I knew if I didn't go now, it would just get

At left, a Cadet rappels during summer air assault training at Fort Knox, Ky. Photo by Forrest Berkshire. Below, Cadet Jessica Carlock stands on a bridge over the Seine River in Paris with Notre Dame Cathedral in the background during a summer abroad studying in France. Photo submitted



harder" to get a slot once commissioned, MacWillie said.

"Being exposed to Soldiers was really an experience. It opened my eyes that Cadet land is not the end-all of this experience."

MacWillie is what many would term a "high-speed" Cadet, with a 3.6 GPA and accomplishments that include completing airborne, earning the gold German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge, participation in the Robin Sage training exercise with Special Forces, serving as his school's warrior training battalion S3, member of college honors societies and a distinguished military graduate, as well as being named the top senior Cadet at his school and 2010 George C. Marshall Award winner.

So he was a little self-confident going into the Mountain Warfare Course. But not for long.

"I graduated sixth from the bottom, which was something new for me," MacWillie said. "It was very humbling."

Despite the lesson in humility, MacWillie said he thinks the extra training and badges on his uniform as a Cadet will give him some bona fides at his first assignment with the Soldiers he will lead.

"They might think, 'He's not completely green, he's just 99 percent green,'" he said.



Samantha Ste.Claire and Justin Gates stand outside the Sports Network International office in Daytona Beach, Fla. The couple serves as the company's chief executive officer and competition director, respectively. SNI runs drill meets for the Army, Navy and Air Force, as well as the National High School Drill Team Championships held annually in Daytona.

By Steve Arel

U.S. Army Cadet Command

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — A sailor judging last year's National High School Drill Team Championships approached Samantha Ste.Claire after the competition, saying she was indebted to her.

Not previously knowing the judge, a puzzled Ste.Claire asked for an explanation.

It turns out the sailor, several years before, was a Junior ROTC Cadet who competed in the national meet. At that time, she was approaching the end of her high school career unsure about what to do in life after graduation.

She discovered it in Daytona. The exposure to fellow students from around the country who exhibited considerable drive and determination brought the girl's outlook into focus, and she wound up joining the Navy.

Such stories stemming from the influence of meets put on by Ste.Claire and Sports Network International, the company she runs with her husband, Justin Gates, are commonplace. In fact, those who know the couple — and those who only know the events they manage — say they perhaps have done as much as anyone over the years to advance the sport of drill and create opportunities for young people.

As the road to the 2010 national meet got under way this spring with the Army's Western

and Eastern drill championships, Ste.Claire and Gates continued their push to shine a national spotlight on Junior ROTC. Their goal is to ensure the achievements of Cadets are recognized alongside those of traditional athletic teams and academic squads.

The fact that they provide a venue for students to showcase their talent isn't as important as the personal and professional development offered by JROTC, they say.

“Junior ROTC, as a whole, creates a unique cross-section of society that is a cut above,” Ste.Claire said. “Everything they do to prepare kids for adulthood creates a kid inherently better suited for adulthood and citizenship than the average kids not in Junior ROTC. Junior ROTC is producing more good than any other program in high schools throughout this country.”

Ste.Claire and Gates see it all the time, through their travels and conversations with Cadets and cadre. A student in dire need of direction and purpose finds it in the school's JROTC program. And after a year or more under an instructor's tutelage and the rigors of the curriculum, they perform better in the classroom and in life.

“Junior ROTC takes kids to the next level,” Ste.Claire said. “The instructors are not just teachers. They're pseudo-parents. They're life coaches, mentors and are there for kids in a way few other high school teachers are. In most extracurricular activities, the coach is

there to do a specific job that starts and ends with the parameters of the job. Junior ROTC extends way beyond that.”

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SNI's belief in JROTC is rooted in the company's foundation, established by Ste.Claire's parents almost 30 years ago.

The late Kip Horton was a football coach when he was approached by coaches from Northern schools about playing in Florida around Thanksgiving. He held small tournaments to accommodate his colleagues, and interest quickly grew.

Horton began making so many long distance calls that were creating a financial pinch, he turned the tournaments into a business. His wife, the late Jean Weil, joined him.

They named the company Sports Network International, in part, to give it immediate stature.

A year after SNI began, a JROTC instructor, himself a youth football coach familiar with the Thanksgiving tournament, suggested the company venture into high school drill.

In 1982, SNI hosted the first national drill meet on a high school football field in Orlando. Though only 16 teams took part, the inclusion of LaSalle Academy, considered the nation's top high school drill team at the time and the eventual winner, brought instant legitimacy to the event, Ste. Clair said.

The nationals bounced around to different sites until 1986, when it moved permanently

to Daytona and the Ocean Center, which sits only a few hundred feet from the city's famous Atlantic Ocean shores.

Horton and Weil had no experience in the military. They learned the sport on the fly, their daughter said. But the success of their meets garnered attention.

SNI got its start running Army drill meets in 1992 when it was asked to organize a competition for 23 schools in the Washington, D.C., area. Over time, programs outside the capital pushed for inclusion and that eventually led to separate meets in the eastern and western halves of the country.

The company signed on to run Navy meets in 1999 and Air Force competitions in 2000.

Throughout the 12 years Leon McMullen, the deputy director for Army JROTC, has worked alongside SNI, he said among its greatest impact to drill has been the establishment of a single standard by which the sport is judged. That way, all programs from all services know what is expected on the competition floor.

More than that, SNI's impact on the sport and the Cadets has been far-reaching, McMullen said.

“They help our cause” in reinforcing the value of JROTC, he said. “As far as reaching out and touching the lives of young people, there's not an organization more supportive.”

Though the football tournaments remain a key piece of SNI's operation, drill competitions have come to dominate its business.

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The biggest organization in the sport of drill shares its home city with the heavyweights of auto racing and women's golf. The headquarters for NASCAR and the famed Daytona International Speedway sit just a couple miles from SNI, while the base for the Ladies Professional Golf Association is a few more miles away.

Despite its significant size, in terms of stature, Sports Network operates with a minuscule staff. Just five people, including Ste. Clair and Gates, organize and run the six drill meets across the country, a national Raider meet, two summer drill camps and two national youth football tournaments.

On top of that, they operate four extensive Web sites dedicated to the sports, as well as an annual magazine targeted to the military competitions.

Many people often ask Ste.Claire how they manage to do it all. Besides a team of part-

timers and volunteers who help on event days, “We work our asses off,” she said.

SNI prides itself on being self-sufficient and self-contained. Employees handle everything involved with an event, from registration to printing T-shirts and programs to making signs. They even acquire enough raw materials to put together hundreds of trophies each year for winners of the events, right down to the nameplates they engrave themselves.

Doing it all in-house cuts down on expenses and affords total control, especially when changes need to be made at the last minute. It also gives SNI the flexibility to make trophies grand in scale. Most tower several feet high, including overall champion hardware that reaches six feet.

There is a reason for the excessive size of the



Sharron Rich shows some of the dozens of competition signs SNI has made for schools taking part in the meets it runs. Photo by Steve Arel

trophies. SNI wants winners to be able to display their accolades right alongside the trophies of their school's football and basketball champions and be easily noticed.

“Those kids cherish them,” said retired Lt. Col. Paul Loveless, the senior Army instructor at Ronal Reagan High School in San Antonio. “The sport has improved because of the initiative to show what is the best of Daytona.”

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As much as Sports Network has influenced scores of Cadets and cadre, it has had a similar affect on those who run it.

Ste.Claire attended Florida State University, then left, unsure about what she wanted to do in life. She joined the family business shortly after returning home in 1983, helping fill in gaps and handling logistics.

Ste.Claire was good at the job, and had found that the pace and constant interaction with people from around the country turned her from an introvert to an extrovert.

By the mid- to late-1980s, interest in the

competitions ballooned. At one of his drill meets, Horton met an enthusiastic man, whose energy and interest in the sport intrigued him. His name was Justin Gates.

Horton offered him a position overseeing the drill competitions, and Gates left the University of Central Florida to work full-time.

He and Ste.Claire became SNI's workhorses, putting in upward of 80 hours a week. They had fallen for their work.

They soon fell for each other. The couple married and now have three children — two girls and a boy.

Those who work for Ste.Claire and Gates say the couple's dogged determination and attention to detail complement each other.

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Ste.Claire has publicly credited her husband with raising the scope of the national meet and making it more of a premier event. Participation has jumped to almost 150 schools, and teams from every state in the country have competed at nationals over the years.

Gates, who serves as SNI's competition director, describes himself as a drill-junkie. He has no previous military or drill experience — and neither do any of the SNI employees.

He simply has spent hours poring through military manuals, reading regulations and watching competitions. Gates has blossomed into such an aficionado of drill, right down to the minute points such as the

proper degree of feet angles during a facing movement, that it has taken aback even some who have drilled professionally.

Retired 1st Sgt. Jim Tadyksi is a former drill sergeant and member of the famed Old Guard at Fort Meyer, Va., where the Army's precision drill team is based. Today, he's the senior Army instructor and drill team coach for Grant High School in Louisiana.

He said Gates' wealth of knowledge is impressive.

“The guy has more knowledge than some NCOs in the Army,” Tadyksi said.

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Ste.Claire and Gates constantly look for ways to improve their products and the way they operate. In fact, they said, many ideas they incorporate into the functionality of their events come from people outside their office.

The couple wants to reach out even more to get America to pay attention to JROTC. One

continued on page 21

continued from page 5

was taught as a young Soldier at boards, they will challenge your answers to see of you doubt yourself,” Kojo said. “They do this because as a leader, you have to stick to your guns. Soldiers will see hesitancy. It is something that always stuck with me.”

Kojo’s unflappable poise and in-depth knowledge displayed during a grueling question-and-answer board set him above the other competitors.

“He could not be rattled,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Green Sr., one of the board members. “We threw a lot of variables at the competitors. Kojo knew the second- and third-order effect of everything thrown at him. It was evident he did a lot of studying.”

Kojo, a 12-year Army veteran who hails from Alhambra, Calif., called his competition tough.

Kojo brings a wealth tactical and specialized expertise to his job training Cadets to become officers, his boss said. He has participated in the decision-making process throughout the NCO Corps and observed both junior and senior military commanders in combat environments.

“He really understands the importance of officership and training of Cadets,” said Lt. Col. Leland Biebe, professor of military science UC-Berkeley.

Kojo brings a wealth tactical and specialized expertise to his job training Cadets to become officers, his boss said.

“He is one of the best leaders I’ve seen at the E-6 level. He goes out and gets the mission done. He represents the best in NCOs today. Standing in front of Cadets, they see what

they can expect from an NCO. His expertise and mission-focused sense of accomplishment benefit the Cadets.”

While making final travel plans to Fort Sill, Kojo learned his former squad leader while assigned to 3rd Battalion, Charlie Co., 75th Ranger Regiment would be one of the competitors.

“He used to run us into the ground,” Kojo said of Sgt. 1st Class David Briseno. “His style



Staff Sgt. Russell Kojo, left, who won the NCO of the Year competition for Cadet Command, stands with his former squad leader Sgt. 1st Class David Briseno, while awaiting results of the NCoY board. Kojo credits Briseno's leadership and training for his success as a Soldier.

Photo by Terry Mann

of leadership taught me about myself, the importance of training ... training to the mission, not time. I’ve been trying to follow in his footsteps.”

Teaching intangibles like valor, courage and confidence drive Briseno in his approach to leadership and training. He strives to provide his Soldiers with the keys to their personal and mission success.

“Staff Sgt. Kojo winning is a win for me as an NCO,” Briseno said. “I wouldn’t expect anything less of him.”

Meeting at the competition was a reunion of sorts for the two friends who worked and deployed together over the years. Now that he is an

Army ROTC instructor, Briseno brings the same approach to training Cadets he used as an NCO training troops.

“I’ve always demonstrated leadership

through teaching and training by personal example,” said Briseno, who competed in his first NCOY event. “It builds respect and credibility with Cadets and peers when they see you step outside your comfort zone.”

Briseno said he didn’t have time to compete in boards in the past because of frequent deployments. While not deployed, he attended courses like Lancero school (Ranger school hosted by Columbian Army), Survival, Eva-

sion, Resistance and Escape schools, combat diving and various freefall, airborne and weapons courses.

“This board allows me to work on a weakness – boards, administrative knowledge and presentation in this type of environment,” he said. “I have the tactical skills, but need to work on the technical skills required of senior NCOs.

Competing here is a good refresher and re-

minder of the important things for an NCO. It’s important for me to be here and compete on other boards because I will soon be sitting on boards. This is another form of leading by example.”

Two new events to the NCOY competition were a written test culled from the Army Study Guide and Army history, along with some special questions developed by the sergeants major, and a mystery event during the lanes competition that involved a MEDEVAC radio procedure. The test was designed to be difficult. The mystery test was designed to challenge real world decision-making and thought processes.

“During development of the test, we had retirees, officers and senior NCOs take sample tests. Most answered between 20-25 questions correctly,” said Sgt. Maj. James McGruder, operations and plans NCO for Cadet Command.

While each of the competitors performed well in the various events, Kojo set himself apart by answering 41 questions correctly on the test and consistently scoring points in each

of the other events. The runner-up was Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Bunton of Princeton University. Bunton also participated in the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club induction event held during the same time as the NCOY competition.

Seven NCOs sought induction into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club. Selection was based on demonstrated individual valor, sense of sacrifice, leadership philosophy and NCO knowledge.

Inducted were Staff Sgt. John Russell, University of Houston; Sgt. 1st Class Kerri Minor, Mississippi State University; Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Spaulding, University of Tennessee at Martin; and Sgt. 1st Class Eugene Brown, Stetson University.

“It’s good to see NCOs out here tuning up their skills. We need to make sure our NCOs are top-level instructors at their campuses. Events like these let them prove they are the ‘best of the best’ ... the best leaders possible to train the Army’s future officers,” said Command Sgt. Major Hershel Turner, while observing the events. The command sergeant major of U.S. Army Cadet Command served as president of both boards.

The process of competing on boards is time-consuming. Doing so requires meticulous attention to detail, studying, rehearsing, training and constant preparation.

The intent of the sergeants major conducting the board was to push the attendees out of their comfort zone with a series of rapid questions, situational scenarios and problem-solving questions. The board members hope to create a pressurized, stressful environment to fully evaluate decision-making processes, memory and military bearing while under pressure.

“I felt like my head was on a swivel,” Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Kimmes, the 4th Brigade operations NCO, said of his experience before the board. “Everyone has a different perspective and different answer that can be correct.”

Some of the questions asked were straightforward, dealing with counseling or professional growth development for subordinates. Others were complicated philosophical and regulatory questions that required an ability to factor DoD policy, commander’s intent and NCO duties and responsibilities.

“When I stood up to exit the board, I realized my hand was soaking wet,” inductee Minor said.

The long hours of preparation and rehearsals, and long hours in the field before appearing in ASU or Class-As before a board of command sergeants major, benefit the participants no matter how they place.

“NCOs subject themselves to this process because excellence is the standard, and they want to be the standard bearer,” Green said.

continued from page 19

of their targets is corporate America, with a goal of connecting businesses with Cadets – whether through booths at meets or by other means – whose skill set could someday bolster their companies.

“I want corporate America to see that if they want to find kids where they don’t have to worry about focus and awareness and want somebody who can work for you with pride, let me give you somebody who has been trained in all that,” Ste.Claire said. “There’s plenty of kids out there who want to find a career and what they’re going to do with their life. I want them to understand and appreciate what Junior ROTC is.”

In some parts of the country, JROTC – and the military, for that matter – is viewed unfavorably for various reasons. Some communities have even lobbied to remove JROTC from their schools.

The problem stems from long-standing misconceptions, Ste.Claire and Gates said, and a stereotype of JROTC that teeters between neutral and negative.

What the program needs is more visibility, they contend. Americans need to understand that JROTC is not a military recruiting tool and that instructors are not merely filling their class periods by telling war stories.

continued from page 4

stitute of Technology’s Tiger Battalion, I am extremely proud of this program’s many successes and achievements,” said Col. Glenn H. Goldman, who heads 2nd Brigade. “The RIT and its Tiger Battalion traditionally have produced high-quality Army officers and together enjoy a tremendous reputation of excellence. This recognition demonstrates the high standards we expect from our battalion cadre as we prepare our Cadets for their future leadership duties to serve in the U.S. Army as officers.”

The Army ROTC battalions selected for the awards were the most successful of the command’s 273 units in accomplishing the mission of training and commissioning the majority of the lieutenants entering the Army each year.

The eight Cadet Command brigades are based at the following locations: 1st Brigade, Fort Knox, Ky.; 2nd Brigade, Fort Dix, N.J.; 3rd Brigade, Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Ill.; 4th Brigade, Fort Bragg, N.C.; 5th Brigade, Fort Sam Houston, Texas ; 6th Brigade, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.; 7th Brigade, Fort Knox, Ky.; and 8th Brigade, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

“That is disturbing to me because of how much good it does,” Ste.Claire said.

And for as much as some detest the military, Gates questions their mindset.

“What is wrong with a career in the military?” he asked. “There’s nothing wrong with kids going into Junior ROTC, developing an appreciation for what the military is and deciding to join the Reserves, active duty or whatever. I don’t think it’s fair to exclude the possibility of a military future for these kids. To actively discourage it I think is a joke.”

Whether a student pursues a military career is irrelevant to Ste.Clair and Gates. They simply want to offer a venue for them to thrive. They would even like to see the national meet broadcast on television someday.

Until then, as another drill season looms, those at SNI eagerly await the chance to see Cadets put months of practice to the test. It all leads up to the 28th annual National High School Drill Team Championships May 1-3.

“I could win the lottery tomorrow and no matter what I did, I wouldn’t stop doing nationals,” Ste.Claire said. “It gives me the opportunity to interact with the finest people I’ve ever met in my life — people I would consider my closest friends. I am a better person because of the relationships I’ve made.”

continued from page 4

ministrators who long have supported the program.

He believes the Lady Chargers’ unarmed title will serve as inspiration for other schools.

“It’ll inspire everybody to work hard and compete hard,” Rountree said. “It shows you that on a particular day, it can be anybody who performs at their best.”

That’s the same message Francis Lewis coaches and instructors have continually preached to their students, despite their dominance.

Drill coach and retired Master Sgt. Lawrence Badia called the second-place finish something of a wake-up call.

“We get back, and there’s no break,” Badia said. “We get back and focus on the Super Bowl. That’s Daytona.”

In the armed division, the Patriot Guard claimed the inspection and color guard competitions en route to the overall win. Winter Springs High School of Florida finished second.

The championships featured 43 teams from 28 schools across the eastern half of the country. Schools came from as far away as New York and southern Florida.

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